DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 122 355 EA 008 084

AUTHOR Pohland, Paul A.
TITLE Perspectives on Instructional Supervision: The Model Muddle.
PUB DATE Apr 76
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, California, April 19-23, 1976). Tables may not reporduce clearly due to small type

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Counseling; Curriculum; Educational Administration; Elementary Secondary Education; Human Relations; Instruction; *Instructional Improvement; Microteaching; *Models; Motivation; Organization; *Supervision; *Teacher Supervision; Teaching

ABSTRACT

The literature on instructional supervision pervasively argues that its manifest purpose is to improve instruction. However, the literature is seriously deficient in proposing any well-articulated theory of supervision, and, consequently, both the conceptual and operational bases for executing supervision's function are in dispute. Hence the current body of literature is marked by a diversity of perspectives. The present paper is a first attempt at a comparative analysis of a representative sample of perspectives. Seven perspectives on instructional supervision--administrative, clinical, counseling, curriculum, motivation, human relations, and microteaching--are analyzed on the basis of 11 selected variables--conception of teaching, basic underlying assumption, focus, role and function, structure, conceptual base, specialized supervisor training, intended outcomes, organizational position of the supervisor, power base of supervisor, and the nature of the supervisor-teacher relationship. The major results of the analysis indicate high conceptual and operational variability among the models, substantial overlap among conceptually distinct perspectives, variability in scope of supervisory functions, variability in compatibility with existing organizational realities, and variability in internal consistency. (Author)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED122355

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

20.16

PERSPECTIVES ON INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION:

THE MODEL MUDDLE

PAUL A. POHLAND

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Paper prepared for the 1976 AERA Annual Meeting

San Francisco, California, April, 1976

EA 008 084

Of all the themes in the literature on instructional supervision none is more pervasive than that its manifest purpose is the improvement of instruction. Agreement on purpose, however, does not extend to agreement on means. Examples of this are legion. To cite only a few, subject matter specialists tend to see improvement of instruction in terms of curriculum reform and its associated teacher re-training component. Teachers by and large argue improvement more in terms of reduction in class size, higher salaries and reduced teaching loads. Administrators tend to concentrate more on facilities and equipment, structural arrangements for the delivery of instructional services, communication linkages, and the like. On a wider scale there are those who contend that significant improvement of instruction can and will occur only through alterations in public policy. Court ordered busing is but one example of the latter.

The lack of agreement relative to means is equally evident when approached from a more restricted perspective. "Improvement of instruction" is most frequently operationalized as "Improvement of teaching." In this transformation supervision becomes largely analogous to teaching. A key element in that analogy is the relationship between supervisor and teacher. That relationship is presumed to be essentially that of teacher and student, a relationship characterized by intense and continuous interaction, instruction, performance, observation and feedback. Yet even here there is wide divergence relative to focus, means and ends. In short, surveying the field of supervision one comes to the inescapable conclusion that it is indeed "low paradigm" (Kuhn, 1962). In the main it lacks the symbolic

generalization, shared beliefs and values, and the cumulative body of research characteristic of mature disciplines. Hence what I have referred to in the title as "the model muddle."

The purpose of the present paper is to take an initial stab at charting what currently exists. Seven prevalent perspectives (one hesitates to say models but the term will be used) have been chosen for analysis. The universe of perspectives is substantially larger as one might expect in a low paradigm field. These seven will then be subject to comparative analysis on the basis of eleven variables. Again, the potential number of variables clearly exceeds twelve.

The seven perspectives--administrative, clinical, counseling, curriculum, motivation (stress), human relations, and micro-teaching--were selected on the basis of representativeness. That is to say that they represent classes of perspectives allowing for wide variability within classes. For example, within the class labeled "clinical" there is variability in the perspectives offered by Cogan (1973), Goldhammer (1969), and Mosher and Purpel (1972). The number of "practitioner" variations within this class is probably infinite.

The eleven variables tend to form two sets: those related directly or indirectly to the perspective (variables 1-8), and those specifying organizational factors (variables 9-11).

Set one begins with an examination of the conception of teaching. The logic for starting thus is derived as follows: supervision is usually justified on the basis of its presumed contribution to "the improvement of instruction." "Improvement" tends to be a largely non-operationalized

concept due to measurement difficulties. In contrast, "instruction" tends almost invariably to become equated with "teaching." In short, "improvement of instruction" becomes transformed into "improvement of teaching." Hence it is not unreasonable to ask what conception of teaching implicitly or explicitly (and most frequently the former) undergirds the model advocated.

The next eight variables look more closely at the model itself. Variable two attempts to determine the basic assumptions of the model exclusive of the concept of teaching. Such determination leads easily into questions of focus (variable three). Clearly, multiple foci are possible. Determining focus should aid in determining the more explicit supervisory role and function (variable 4), and, in combination with variables one through three should be instrumental in establishing the model's structure (variable five). Logically a well articulated model has a clear conceptual base (variable six), and provides the basis for specialized supervisor training (variable seven). Finally, if well executed, the model should predict some clear outcomes (variable eight).

Variables nine through eleven identify some of the more salient organizational factors. Inclusion of these is predicated on the fact that instructional supervision in schools is an organizational activity and hence is strongly influenced by a set of organizational factors. Three such factors are identified although there are obviously more: the supervisor's position within the hierarchical structure of the school (variable nine); the "power base" of the supervisor (after French and Raven, 1960; variable ten); and, the nature of the supervisor-teacher relationship (variable eleven).

Two cautions should be kept in mind before examining Table 1. First, the author's frame of reference is instructional supervision in public elementary and secondary schools. Pre-service (student teaching) supervision and supervision in higher education are not central. Second, the various perspectives are constructed or reconstructed from a wide variety of sources. This clearly results in some loss of specificity. However, students of supervision will undoubtedly be able to detect the influence of such scholars as Goldhammer (1969), Brown (1962), Anderson (1967), Bartky (1953), Mosher and Purpel (1972), Willower (1972), and others in connection with particular perspectives.

Insert Table I

No exhaustive analysis of the data presented in Table 1 will be undertaken here at this time. Substantial refinement is necessary before such an act would be warranted. However, some generalizations can be made.

The most striking observation is the extreme variability. There are, for example, few if any conceptual or operational similarities between administrative or clinical perspectives on supervision. Much the same could be said about counseling and curriculum models. In a sense this should not be surprising given supervision's low paradigm development.

Second, few of the models appear to be "clean," that is, considerable blurring or overlap probably can and does occur. Curriculum oriented

Table 1. Models of Supervision

Variables	Administrative	Clinical	Counseling	Curriculum	Motivation	Human Relations	Micro-Teaching
1. Conception of teaching	Organizational activity enacted by teachers in conformity with role expectations; a coordinated processing of students through the production subsystem.	An intellectual and social act characterized by patterned teacher-student interaction; a teacher behavior.	Enactment of a teacher's personal role definition in an instructional setting.	Transmission of knowledge organized by disciplines; may or may not include a value dimension.	An instrumental act energized by teacher needs and drives.	A face-to-face interactive process encompassing teacher and student personality variables within an instructional environment.	Execution of an identifiable set of pedagogical roves or acts.
2. Basic assumptions undergirding model	Supervision is an element of administration and is therefore executed by administrators; teachers are subordinate, (if professional) members of an organization.	What the teacher does is the basic determinant of what students learn: teaching is behavior, therefore improvement is secured by altering teacher behavior.	What the teacher is or feels about himself personally is the basic determinant of his behavior and subsequently of what students learn.	The content of what is taught largely determines instructional processes; hence improvement of instruction begins with curriculum reform.	Teacher performance is a function of teacher motivation. Stress is an effective motivator.	Teachers are internally motivated; improvement of instruction occurs through energizing latent abilities.	Teaching is behavior. Improvement occurs as sets of discreet skills are mastered and integrated.
3. Focus of supervision	Typically on maintenance and control; exemplified in formal teacher evaluation as personnel decision-making mechanisms.	Analysis of teaching.	Person of the teacher, particularly the affective orientation to role; may focus on secondary processes.	Curriculum reform and associated instructional processes.	Assessment of teacher classroom behavior as an overt manifestation of the level of motivation.	Development of human interaction skills in instructional settings.	Identification and remediation of weaknesses in teacher's technical/ pedagogical repertoire

Table 1 (Continued)

Variables	Administrative	Clinical	Counseling	Curriculum	Motivation	Human Relations	Micro-Teaching
4. Supervisory role and function	Primarily administrative or quasi-administrative; teacher evaluation a major function; may be utilized as a linkage mechanism.	Designed to provide teacher in-service training ("teacher educator") with emphasis on the analysis of teaching.	Essentially a counseling role instituted to aid in the development in the teacher's professional identity.	Curriculum consultant (or specialist) delegated leadership in the identification of instructional objectives, determination of curriculum priorities, and R and D processes.	Quasi-administrative; responsible for generating cognitive dissonance (inducing stress) as a means of raising teacher motivation levels.	Administrative or quasi-administrative given the broad scope of expectations; major thrust on enhancing social integration within the context of a formal organization.	Technical specialist designed to provide teacher training in instructional technologies.
5. Structure of model	No clearly articulated structure; characteristically dependent upon secondary sources of information, infrequent and unscheduled classroom visitations, and utilization of formal evaluation instruments.	1. Pre-observation conference 2. Classroom observation 3. Analysis and strategy 4. Conference 5. Post-mortem (after R. Goldhammer).	1. Self-analysis (reflection) 2. Interpretation 3. Confrontation 4. Revision (after Mosher and Purpel).	No singular model; usually proceeds through assessment, development, implementation, and re-assessment phases. May or may not include significant teacher training components.	No singular model; typically includes observation followed by providing negative feedback either implicitly or explicitly.	No singular model; dependent upon high face-to-face interaction; may utilize formal sensitivity training processes or other forms of group interaction.	1. Identification of skill to be learned 2. Modeling 3. Practice 4. Demonstration 5. Feedback 6. (Re-cycle as necessary)
6. Conceptual base	Administrative and organizational theory.	Instructional process and learning theory.	Counseling psychology.	Curriculum theory and disciplinary content; instructional process theory usually secondary.	Motivation psychology.	Group dynamics.	Instructional processes (technology).

Table 1 (Continued)

Variables	Administrative	Clinical	Counseling	Curriculum	Motivation	Human Relations	Micro-Teaching
7. Specialized supervisor training	Background in administration (theory and practice).	Broad background in the behavioral sciences and in-depth knowledge of instructional processes.	Extensive professional and clinical training in counseling psychology.	Extensive background in curriculum theory and R&D processes; specific discipline mastery a probable necessity.	Background in clinical psychology.	Major specialty in group dynamics and interpersonal relations.	Primarily in the instructional process domain, especially the technologies of teaching.
8. Intended outcomes	Increased teacher compliance; increased probabilities of achieving organizational maintenance goals.	Teacher mastery of teaching craft; teacher as clinical analyst of his own teaching.	Establishment of personal role definition.	Curriculum reform.	Heightened level of teacher motivation to perform.	Reduction in potential dissonance among organizational expectations and individual and group needs.	Teacher mastery of the technologies of teaching.
9. Organizational position of supervisor	Line office.	Staff office.	Staff office.	Staff office.	Line office.	Line or staff office but preferably staff.	Staff office.
10. Power base of supervisor	Legitimate power.	Expert power	Expert and referent power.	Expert power.	Legitimate, reward coercive and expert power.	Referent and expert power.	Expert power.
11. Supervisor-teacher relationship	Superordinate-subordinate.	Master-apprentice.	Counselor-counselee.	Master-apprentice to collegial.	Superordinate-subordinate.	Collegial.	Master-apprentice.

models tend to encompass elements of teaching models as do clinical and human relations models. Again, this is probably to be expected.

Third, one can observe varying degrees of structural development. Generally speaking, clinical and micro-teaching models tend to have well-defined anatomies. Administrative, human relations, and curriculum models (except in the gross R&D sense) appear to be initially less structured. Under those perspectives structure appears to develop "in process."

Fourth, the scope of the supervisory task executed under the various perspectives differ. Administrative and human relations models tend to be almost all-encompassing. Few aspects of the teacher's work escape their purview. Clinical and teaching models appear to have a much more restricted scope. This is most noticeable in micro-teaching designs.

Fifth, some perspectives appear more compatible with prevailing organizational structures and social psychological realities of schools than others. Administrative and curriculum models appear to "fit." Current structures do not easily accommodate counseling or clinical models in either the organizational or normative senses. Stress models are probably the least acceptable.

Sixth, it is apparent that some models are more conceptually consistent than others. For example, motivation (stress) models call for a high degree of expertise on the part of the motivator lest inappropriate degrees of stress are applied. Yet the imposition of stress must be legitimated, and organizational (if not individual) legitimation rests upon the exercise of legal power. This creates obvious difficulties relative to the location of the supervisor within the organizational structure. Similar problems attend the human relations model where

the scope of activities require administrative legitimation but normative compliance on the part of teachers.

In conclusion, two major issues should be raised, neither of which is original. First, significant advance in any field is dependent upon the cumulative contributions of scholars working in that field. Supervision fares badly in this respect. There is no substantial body of research to draw upon. Even the "clinicians" are reluctantly compelled to rest their case on personal conviction and experience.

This leads to the second and related issue. The absence of a research base leaves practitioners without guidance in determining which models produce which effects under which conditions. This makes them doubly vulnerable. In the first instance they are highly susceptible to press from the external environment. The historically shifting foci of supervision bear ample testimony to this. In the second instance they are typically the first casualties in reorganization moves. Both pressures combine to generate a reactive stance. Our history tells us that such a posture rarely results in the achievement of great ends.

REFERENCES

Anderson, R. H. "Supervision as Teaching: An Analogue." In W. H. Lucio, ed., Supervision: Perspectives and Propositions. Washington, D.C.: ASCD, 1967, 29-41.

Bartky, J. A. Supervision As Human Relations. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1953.

Brown, A. F. "Conflict and stress in Administrative Relationships." Administrator's Notebook, X, No. 7 (March, 1962), 1-4.

Cogan, M. Clinical Supervision. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973.

French, J. R. P., Jr. and Raven, B. "The Bases of Social Power." In D. Cartwright and A. Zander, eds., Group Dynamics. Second Edition, Evanston: Row, Peterson and Company, 1960, 607-623.

Goldhammer, R. Clinical Supervision. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969.

Kuhn, T. S. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962.

Mosher, R. L. and Purpel, D. E. Supervision: The Reluctant Profession. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972.

Willower, D., Cistone, P., and Packard, J. "Some Functions of the Supervisory Role in Educational Organizations." Education, 92, No. 3 (February-March 1972), 66-68.